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12 October 1977

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Note: As a result of a reorganization, effective 11 October 1977, intelligence publications formerly issued by the Directorate of Intelligence and by the National Intelligence Officers are now being issued by the National Foreign Assessment Center. Publication covers and titles have been adjusted to reflect this change. This publication was formerly titled *China Regional and Political Analysis*.

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the East Asia/Pacific Division, Office of Regional and Political Analysis, with occasional contributions from other offices within the National Foreign Assessment Center. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Chinese Document Soviet Border Provocations

Chinese officials in recent months have been unusually precise in specifying to foreign visitors the nature of Soviet-instigated border incidents in the northwest and northeast regions of China. The incidents reportedly have not led to armed clashes similar in size to the company-level firefights of 1969, but some shooting allegedly did occur in Sinkiang.

Regional officials in Sinkiang recently told a group that "six Soviet spies on a special mission" had been intercepted in July by Chinese border guards at Kashgar. The Chinese did not explain how the six managed to reach the city, which is 70 miles from the Soviet border in the Pamir Mountains area, without being detected. In an ensuing clash, the Chinese killed one, one killed himself (presumably to avoid being taken alive), and four escaped to Soviet territory. The officials went on to say that the Chinese are now holding the weapons and identification cards of the two dead men and have offered to return their remains on conditions that the Soviets admit that they had been engaged in a clandestine mission. Local Soviet authorities are said to have denied the Chinese accusation, declaring the men to have been "bad elements who deal in opium"--an explanation the Chinese reject. A Chinese "Dispute Settlement Committee" in Sinkiang is said to be negotiating with local Soviet authorities on the matter. 25X1

The Chinese further complained that the Soviets have organized three groups of anti-Chinese Muslims, who earlier had fled to the USSR, with the intention of infiltrating them back into Sinkiang clandestinely to recruit agents. The Soviets almost certainly are continuing their long-term effort to revive and exploit the separatist tendency among the Turkic (primarily Muslim) ethnic groups in Sinkiang, and may well be Muslim refugees trained in the USSR to return and carry the message of resistance. The longstanding hostility of the Sinkiang

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Muslims to the Chinese remains just below the surface today, and the Chinese continue to worry about the Soviet effort to recruit Muslim dissidents. [redacted]

[redacted] they are jamming incoming Soviet broadcasts, particularly those directed at the northern Sinkiang city of Altai. However, the Chinese broke the back of organized Muslim resistance between 1962 and 1967, and the Soviets probably do not have any significant assets or the capability to develop such assets among the unarmed and unorganized minority group.

During Ambassador Woodcock's mid-September tour of the northeast region, a Chinese provincial official in Heilung-kiang complained about the problems the Soviets were causing in the border rivers. He stated that the decline in the province's fishing industry was due to heavy Soviet catches in the Amur River and to harassment of Chinese salmon fishermen by Soviet gunboats in the Ussuri River. [redacted]

[redacted] Chinese have complained [redacted] about harassment of their salmon fishermen, who reportedly are now restricted by the Soviets to a 15-day season.

[redacted] despite the current border-river talks on navigation matters, there is no possibility of an improvement in overall Sino-Soviet relations. [redacted]

The motivation of the Chinese in detailing these border difficulties [redacted] has several aspects. First, the Chinese intend to support their charges that Soviet professions of goodwill toward Mao's successors are phoney and Hua Kuo-feng's recent complaint that Moscow "has not shown one iota of good faith" about improving Sino-Soviet relations. Second, they intend indirectly to deny the Soviets any increased leverage in the Sino-Soviet-US triangle despite the lack of progress in bilateral Sino-US relations. It is unlikely, however, that Peking believes Moscow can be impelled by the pressure of international opinion to change its border policies. The most the Chinese hope for is some success in portraying the Soviet leaders as intransigent. [redacted]

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A New Policy Toward Intellectuals

Over the past few months, the Chinese Government has been reexamining its policy toward intellectuals, a group buffeted for two decades in shifting political winds. Instead of denouncing their work and their lack of political commitment, the government has recently encouraged them, been tolerant of their "ideological weaknesses," and shown awareness of their importance to China's modernization.

This new attitude has been reflected in a number of plans to improve the lot of intellectuals, and in particular, scientists. These include efforts to:

- Improve the working conditions of intellectuals.
- Reward intellectuals, especially scientists, who make contributions to China's modernization effort.
- Restore titles to scientists.
- Allow scientists to devote the majority of their time to professional work rather than to political study sessions and work in factories and communes. The recent Central Committee circular on science and technology suggested that scientists spend at least five-sixths of their working hours each week on scientific work.
- Ensure that all scientists are given appropriate jobs in their field. There has recently been considerable concern that the country has lost much badly needed talent since the 1960s by removing scientists from their jobs and sending them to work in factories and communes.
- Place people with some professional competence, "experts" or "near-experts," rather than party cadres, in charge of professional work.

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One of the most significant aspects of the new policy toward intellectuals is the plan to allow more freedom of debate and discussion in the sciences. Although this has been discussed in the press since at least March, it has been treated with particular urgency in recent articles. Thus, the Central Committee circular announcing the coming national science conference stated that it was essential to encourage people to dare to think, to speak, and to act, and that it was "criminal" to suppress free academic discussion. Even more unusual was a *Kwangming Daily* editorial on the circular, which abandoned the standard ideological tenet about the wisdom of the masses and instead urged individuals to think independently and be creative. Individual effort and thinking, it noted, were essential to the success of any research project.


So far the call for freedom of discussion and debate has been limited to the sciences, whose development is directly related to efforts to modernize the Chinese economy. For the time being, it is unlikely that it will be extended to the more politically sensitive social sciences and humanities. Many of China's leaders probably remember that the last time the government called for more freedom of thought and discussion--during the "100 Flowers" campaign in 1957--China's intellectuals responded not only with more creative literary and art works, but also with criticism of the government and its policies.

Most of the other specific plans to improve the lot of intellectuals have also been limited to scientists. There is more chance, however, that these will eventually be extended to other intellectuals as well. A number of recent articles have condemned past attacks on intellectuals and past efforts to stifle their work. In addition, the recent rehabilitation of a number of cultural figures, ranging from actors and actresses to the once controversial historian Lo Erh-kang, suggests that the government is now more tolerant of such people and is actively seeking their support.

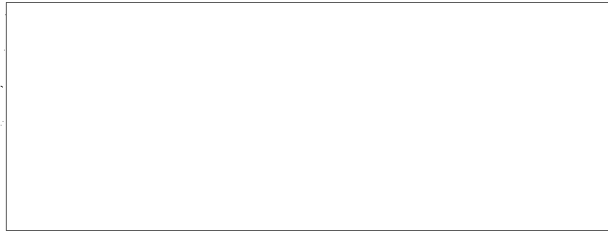
The new policy toward intellectuals is clearly an effort to overcome the negative effects of the political pressures placed on them over the past 20 years. Most Chinese intellectuals have been so intimidated and

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so fear criticism that they are reluctant to commit themselves to any new venture or to take any decisive action. They are likely to respond only halfheartedly to Peking's efforts to lure them back into action until they have reason to believe that the policy is a long-term one. 

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25X1Cultural Returnees: Better Late Than Never

The public rehabilitation on 30 September of Chou Yang and Hsia Yen, major cultural figures who were among the earliest and most vilified victims of the Cultural Revolution, would appear to be a personal triumph for Teng Hsiao-ping. Teng's efforts in 1975 to bring them back brought him into direct conflict with the "gang of four" and contributed to his own downfall. Nevertheless, the fact that former deputy propaganda chief Chou Yang was widely attacked during the period between the fall of the leftists and Teng's return, plus the continuing delay in identifying a new minister of culture, suggests that the rehabilitations were not without controversy and that personnel appointments may be at issue.

① Teng Hsiao-ping has been remarkably persistent in his efforts, now spanning more than two years, to bring these cultural figures back into the limelight. They were apparently rehabilitated, although not publicly, in July 1975.

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② The leftists, and Chiang Ching in particular, undoubtedly saw the return of such influential cultural figures as a direct threat,

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③ In August, the abortive "Water Margin" campaign, with its attacks on the novel's leading character and his supporters for seeking and winning "amnesty," seemed to refer to the rehabilitation of "leading character" Teng and "supporters" like Chou Yang and Hsia Yen. An editorial published on 4 September of that year virtually called a halt to the "Water Margin" campaign, however, and the central directive announcing the cultural rehabilitations was circulated the next day. The leftists, however, redoubled their efforts and by year's end forced the former Minister of Culture, who had not been rehabilitated

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④ to leave the capital.

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① Despite the fall of the leading leftists, there is
③ some evidence that surfacing Chou and Hsia last month
was not an easy matter. Chou Yang, in particular, was
attacked frequently after the fall of the "gang of four"
for his opposition in the 1930s to the writer Lu Hsun.
Lu, in turn, was being praised for his attacks on Chang
Chun-chiao's early writing. Chou Yang was attacked by
name as recently as April of this year, and his re-
habilitation reportedly was being debated in Peking
University the next month.

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① The remaining leftists, in the universities and
elsewhere, are one possible source of opposition to the
return of people like Chou Yang, but it seems likely
that such opposition is more widespread. Leftist in-
fluence in the propaganda apparatus has been virtually
wiped out, and the media attacks on Chou through last
spring must have been coming from other quarters. It
seems more than coincidence that attacks on Chou occurred
while the terms of Teng Hsiao-ping's return were under
discussion, and it is possible that those in the leader-
ship who were trying to delay Teng's return were like-
wise opposed to Chou Yang's rehabilitation.

① The return of Chou Yang is further evidence, if any
is needed, that Teng is practically surrounding himself
with the "old boys" who held sway before the Cultural
Revolution. He is obviously more comfortable with them
than he is with such second generation figures as Hua
Kuo-feng and Wang Tung-hsing. Teng may have in mind
placing Chou Yang and Hsia Yen in important positions in
the propaganda and/or cultural organizations, a move that
conceivably could draw fire from others who would prefer
to see fewer personnel appointments going to people with
allegiances to Teng.

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Overseas Chinese Scientists Provide Expertise

As part of its effort to upgrade China's science and technology, the Chinese Government has recently begun to draw on the knowledge and experience of overseas Chinese scientists, particularly those in the US. Over the past few months, a number of these scientists have been invited to China not only to tour the country and visit friends and relatives, but also to do research, consult with Chinese scientists, and deliver papers at academic conferences. Between April and late August 1977, for example, a Chinese-American geneticist conducted research at the Chinese Academy of Sciences with a prominent Chinese biologist. In August, a noted Chinese-American astrophysicist delivered a paper at a symposium on astrophysics in Anhwei Province. Another astrophysicist, on a visit to China to see relatives, was asked to give a series of lectures to Chinese scientists.

The Chinese Government favors working with such overseas Chinese for a number of reasons. Most are prominent in their fields and have the expertise and mastery of scientific theory that many Chinese scientists lack. They are thus potential sources of information about the advanced Western research techniques and scientific theories that China needs in order to achieve modernization. Because all overseas Chinese invited to lecture or do research have been native-born Chinese who speak Mandarin, there is no language barrier. Many overseas Chinese scientists, moreover, are already well acquainted with some of China's most prominent scientists: they were their schoolmates, friends, and in some cases, even students. Finally, because overseas Chinese scientists are ethnically Chinese, drawing on their expertise may be less of an affront to China's national pride and its policy of self-reliance than drawing on that of other foreign scientists.

The degree of influence overseas Chinese scientists can exert is suggested by an incident which took place

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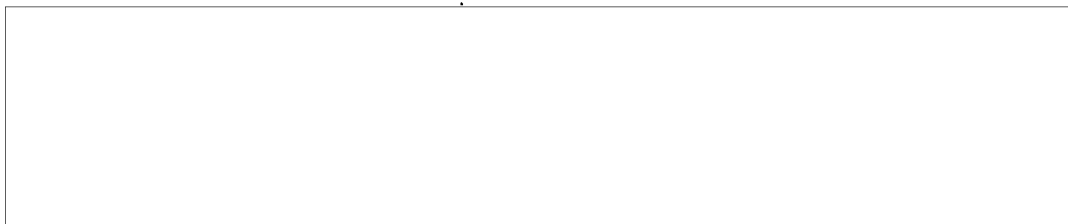
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in 1972. An eminent Chinese-American astrophysicist, on a visit to China, told Mao Tse-tung that China's research and training in basic scientific theory was weak. Mao ordered Chou En-lai to take measures to correct this, and Chou in turn ordered Peking University to upgrade its teaching and research in basic theory. Those efforts, of course, were subsequently undermined by the radical push to politicize China's educational system.

The Chinese Government has shown no interest in arranging similar research projects and consultation for visiting overseas Chinese social scientists. The social sciences and humanities are far more politically sensitive than the sciences. For the time being, the Chinese are likely to approve only those exchanges that make a direct contribution to China's modernization effort.

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Ranks Again For the PLA?

① China's armed forces may again be given military ranks. Peking dropped ranks in 1965 after using them for 10 years and returned to the Chinese convention of addressing military officers by their position or function rather than by a Western-style rank.

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Now, scientists and technicians are to be given titles, [redacted]

② [redacted] The purpose of this move, which flies directly in the face of Maoist egalitarianism, is to recognize the contribution of "technical personnel" to modernization.

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Military rank may also be an issue, at least among leaders of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). It seems clear [redacted]

③ that military modernization will be a very gradual and expensive process. Throughout this year, various low-cost methods of strengthening the PLA have been advocated, including increasing training and improving discipline. Those who favor reviving ranks could argue that it would be an important symbol of advancing modernization of the PLA.

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① Other military leaders, especially political commissars, who are more concerned with ideology, may oppose the restoration of ranks because of their past association with Soviet "revisionism." Some civilian leaders may also resist any effort to bring back military ranks because it would tend to enhance the prestige of those military men who hold concurrent political positions.

① Sooner or later, ranks will probably return to the PLA. Chinese leaders are strongly committed to improving the PLA's weapons and personnel. As a low-cost means of strengthening military professionalism, ranks for the PLA seem almost inevitable. [redacted]

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CHRONOLOGY

23 September

Niger President Seyni Kountehe
leaves China for home. []

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People's Daily and *Liberation
Army Daily* publish editorials
on modernizing science. []

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Delegation from Mozambique
led by Minister of Development
and Economic Planning Marelino
dos Santos leaves for DPRK
after signing aid agreement in
Peking. []

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Wei Kuo-ching identified as
Director of General Political
Department. Wei attends pro-
gram in Peking. []

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Military delegation led by
Deputy Chief of PLA General
Staff Yang Cheng-wu ends visit
to France, leaves for Romania.
[]

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Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping
meets West German delegation
led by Bundestag Defense Com-
mittee Chairman Manfred Woerner.
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Philippine Chief of Staff Espino
leads military delegation to
China. Meets Vice Premier
Teng Hsiao-ping on 28 Septem-
ber. []

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26 September	Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping meets delegation from European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) led by CERN Director General John B. Adams. []	25X1
26-30	Yang Cheng-wu leads military delegation to Romania, meets President Ceausescu on 27 September. []	25X1
27	Equatorial Guinea President Macias leaves China after signing economic aid agreement. []	25X1
28	Yang Yung identified as Deputy Chief of Staff. []	25X1
	Chinese air defense delegation led by Wang Wen-hsien leaves Switzerland for home. []	25X1
28 Sep - 4 Oct	Cambodian Prime Minister and party leader Pol Pot visits Peking, meets Chairman Hua and nine other Politburo members. []	25X1
29	Chairman Hua meets with Paul Niculescu, Romanian Politburo member. []	25X1
30	National leaders host large reception for National Day. All active Peking-based Politburo members attend. Chan Yang and Hsia Yen, cultural officials purged during the Cultural Revolution, reappear for the first time. []	25X1
1 October	Chairman Hua and four vice chairmen meet Mohammed Toha, leader of the Bangladesh Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist). []	25X1

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1 October

National leaders walk in the parks to celebrate National Day, and attend fireworks display in the evening. [] 25X1

Provincial turnouts on National Day reveal a number of new military appointments, including a new commander of the Chengtu Military Region. [] 25X1

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Vice Minister of Foreign Trade Liu Hsi-wen ends visit to Japan. (U)

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Cameroon President Ahidjo arrives in Peking. [] 25X1

Foreign Minister Huang Hua arrives for visit in Canada after attending UN General Assembly session. [] 25X1

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